

AWARD NUMBER: W81XWH-15-1-0141

TITLE: Enhancing Immune Checkpoint Inhibitor therapy in Kidney Cancer

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REPORT DATE: October 2016

TYPE OF REPORT: ANNUAL

PREPARED FOR: U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command
Fort Detrick, Maryland 21702-5012

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

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1. REPORT DATE October 2016		2. REPORT TYPE Annual		3. DATES COVERED 30 Sept 2015 - 29 Sept 2016	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Enhancing Immune Checkpoint Inhibitor therapy in Kidney Cancer				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER W81XWH-15-1-0141	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Hans Hammers, M.D., Ph.D. E-Mail: hans.hammers@utsouthwestern.edu				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Johns Hopkins University Research Administration Edward D. Miller Research Building 733 N. Broadway, Suite 117 Baltimore, Maryland 21205				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command Fort Detrick, Maryland 21702-5012				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for Public Release; Distribution Unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT The purpose of this work is to develop strategies to enhance immune checkpoint inhibition in kidney cancer. The work is designed to test different strategies to induce or enhance the abscopal in a kidney cancer model by combining ablative techniques or TLR agonists with PD1 inhibitors. Progress was stalled early on since the principal investigator has moved institutions from Johns Hopkins to UT Southwestern. The high probability of the move occurred around the time that the funds were made available to Johns Hopkins. Hence the PI did not hire respective personnel as described in the SOW and animal studies were not pursued.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Kidney cancer, Immunotherapy, abscopal effect					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF: a. REPORT Unclassified			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 5	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON USAMRMC
b. ABSTRACT Unclassified					19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)
c. THIS PAGE Unclassified					

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1. **INTRODUCTION:** *Narrative that briefly (one paragraph) describes the subject, purpose and scope of the research.*

The purpose of this research is to test therapeutic strategies to make immune checkpoint inhibition more effective in an animal model of kidney cancer. Our plan is to combine focally ablative techniques such as radiation or cryotherapy with PD1 immune checkpoint inhibition and assess the abscopal effect, i.e. the growth of tumors at a distant, untreated site. Additionally, we will test the effect of TLR agonist administration in this model and look at combination with focally ablative techniques.

2. **KEYWORDS:** *kidney cancer, immunotherapy, PD1, TLR, abscopal, radiation, cryotherapy*

3. **ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

The major goals for the first year were to

- a) produce PD1 antibody from a H5 hybridoma (available from the Drake lab)
- b) obtain IACUC/ACURO approval for the animal protocol
- c) test the effect of radiation or cryotherapy +/- PD1 inhibition on the abscopal effect
- d) analyze tissues for immune cell infiltrates

In the second half of 2015 the strong possibility emerged that I would be joining the kidney cancer program at UT Southwestern. Therefore, the PI held off on hiring additional staff and pursuing animal studies. However, we have acquired PD1 inhibitory antibodies which will be used for subsequent studies at UT Southwestern.

For the upcoming reporting period we will focus on the major goals of the first year as stated above. Thus we will study the effect of ablative therapies on distant tumors with and without concurrent PD1 inhibition.

At UT Southwestern I am a Co-leader at the Kidney Cancer Program and have access to lab space, animal facilities and a pathology core to conduct the studies as outlined in the original statement of work.

4. **IMPACT:**

Nothing to report

5. **CHANGES/PROBLEMS:**

As outlined above the progress with this project was primarily stalled by the PI changing institutions which led to a stop in hiring of key personnel and holding off on animal studies. The PI does not foresee problems or barriers with the conduct of these studies at UT Southwestern.

6. PRODUCTS:

Nothing to report

7. PARTICIPANTS & OTHER COLLABORATING ORGANIZATIONS:

Dr. Hammers, PI, has spent a 15% effort on this project, overseeing antibody production and isolation.

Ms. Huong Nguyen, technician, spent 4 person months on this project. She was involved in cell culture, supernatant collection and antibody isolation.

8. SPECIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

None